

The Introduction and Targeted Rehearsal of New Music

STUDENT TEACHING UNIT PLAN

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Education 402
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***Please Note:** Because of the nature of performance based music classes such as the one that this unit plan covers, unit plans can range from one week to several months. Since most of the activity in regards to learning a new piece of music takes place within the first several rehearsals, the time span of my unit plan is one week or five 50-minute lessons. During this time, I was solely in charge of the band and completely responsible for the introduction and rehearsal of this piece. Additionally, because of OMEA Large Group Adjudicated Event preparation, I did not get the chance to spend entire class periods teaching the band due to the necessity of the director on the podium as they prepared for contest until mid-March. Prior to me essentially taking over the concert band, I was responsible for planning and initiating warm-up activities and performing targeted rehearsal on specific segments of music.*

OVERALL CONCEPT

The initial introduction of new music to a concert band is a very crucial time period. Band directors select music based on the ability level of their bands, the material that the band still needs to learn, and of course the performance value of the work. The Concert Band at Westerville South High School is predominantly made up of freshman and sophomores, totally 77 total members. The Concert Band has been designed as a trainer ensemble to teach students more in-depth musical concepts in a large ensemble setting. The piece that I introduced to the band during the time frame that this unit plan covers is Todd Stalter's *Rampage!*. I had previously done the work with an advanced middle school band before and found it to be particularly appropriate to put in front of a beginner high school level ensemble. At the end of the unit (the introduction and targeted rehearsal phase of concert/ensemble preparation), the students will be able to play through the piece as close to tempo as possible with a reasonable level of comfort and understanding with regards to syncopated rhythms, notes outside of the key signature, significant contrasts in articulation, and dynamic contrast and musical expression. Additionally, the students will work together as a team to facilitate the best ensemble sound and continue to strive towards goals of leadership, responsibility, and personal excellence that every good band program instills upon its students. Furthermore, the student's individual and group preparation of music will help continue their own musical growth and through this growth, begin to have a deeper understanding and appreciation of music as a culturally relevant art form.

OHIO MUSIC CONTENT STANDARDS

The following content standards for performance-based instrumental music classrooms will be employed before, during, and after the completion of this unit. *Please note that other content standards in music may apply but these specific content standards listed are the most relevant to a week long unit plan. Since this ensemble is overwhelmingly freshman, the freshman content standards are listed most often.*

Creative Expression and Communication

- Grade 9 p. 16-20

- **Benchmark A:** Sing and/or play, independently or in ensembles, demonstrating technical and stylistic accuracy and musical expressiveness with appropriate responses to a leader's cues and gestures.
 - 1). Play alone and/or in ensembles, a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres and cultures.
 - 2). Demonstrate technical accuracy, appropriate tone quality, articulation, and expression for the work being performed with good posture and breath control.

- **3).** Respond appropriately to the cues of a conductor or section leader.
- **4).** Demonstrate ensemble skills (e.g., balance, intonation, rhythmic unity, phrasing) while performing as part of a group.
- **5).** Demonstrate sight-reading abilities.
- **Benchmark B:** Read, perform, or compose music repertoire using a variety of tonalities while demonstrating an understanding of the language of music.
 - **9).** Read and perform music with dotted eighth and sixteenth notes and syncopation in duple, triple, and compound meters.
 - **10).** Define vocabulary in all rehearsed and performed music.

Analyzing and Responding

- Grade 9 p. 26

- **Benchmark A:** Analyze and evaluate music selections based upon established criteria.
 - **1).** Analyze conducting patterns and gestures as they relate to music selections.
 - **2).** Analyze and determine the correct technique (e.g., posture, breath support, hand position, embouchure, vocal placement) required for proper tone production.
 - **3).** Describe basic terminology and symbols used in a varied repertoire of music.
- **Benchmark B:** Analyze and respond to conducting patterns and gestures in relation to interpretation of music performance literature.
 - **4).** Analyze how conducting patterns and gestures guide musical interpretation of selected pieces.

PRE-ASSESSMENT

Pre-assessment in a music class is much different than it is in other classrooms. Since music is a learned skill that must be worked on, developed, and perfected over time, pre-assessment in a music class revolves around the previous concert literature that the band has played, whatever they learned in middle school, and what they have already learned this year. While there may not be a traditional “paper and pencil test,” the assessment in a performance-based instrumental music class is the concert as well as every day during rehearsal in preparation for that concert.

For this unit plan, my pre-assessment involved studying the scores and rehearsing the band in their OMEA Large Group Adjudicated Event contest repertoire. Based on the successes and areas that needed work present in that program, I was able to select three pieces of literature that played to the strengths of the students and greatly exposed and improved upon their weaknesses.

HOW DOES THE CONTENT OF THIS UNIT RELATE TO PREVIOUSLY LEARNED MATERIAL?

As stated, a performance-based instrumental music class builds entirely on previously learned material much more so than a typical classroom. Where it is possible to be good in one area and not so good in another area in a typical classroom, a musician will be unable to advance to the next level of musicianship without first attaining all of the required skills to perform the task at hand.

The entire selection of this concert program was done in conjunction with my cooperating teacher who informed me of the band’s strengths and weaknesses and allowed me to experience both of those in podium situations. *Rampage!* was selected partially because of the heavy reliance on low brass (we have a weak low brass section and the piece begins with low brass), the amount of accidentals, the contrasting A and B musical sections (fast and slow), the varying tempi, the key changes in and out of concert F major and concert Bb major, the heavy reliance on percussion nuances, and the sheer difficulty present for low brass and single reed instruments in terms of notes and articulations combined with tempo demands.

HOW DOES THE CONTENT OF THIS UNIT RELATE TO WHAT STUDENTS WILL BE LEARNING IN THE FUTURE?

One of the goals with playing *Rampage!* is to get the band more comfortable playing intricately layered syncopated rhythms, high demand running eighth note lines in instrumental sections that typically don't get these, and showing musical and expressive contrast between fast and rhythmic sections and slow and legato sections in the same piece of music. The piece exposes some particularly weak instrumental sections for our band and forces them to contribute more to the musical texture than they have in the past. Additionally, the skills that *Rampage!* exposes and works on are skills that every musician must possess and maintain throughout their career.

The ability to play the basic musical concepts that this piece illustrates will be skills that can be applied to future learning no matter the level of musician that the student becomes.

Rehearsal Strategy – Concert Band Warm-Up and Introductory Rehearsal
March 21, 2011

Teaching Objective: The goal of this rehearsal is to introduce Todd Stalter's *Rampage!* and begin to piece together musical sections. The warm-up process will prepare the students to be successful in the key of concert F major (concert D minor in some places) and get them used to several rhythms that are present in the piece before the actual introduction of the piece takes place.

Teaching Materials:

- ☐ Score to Timothy Loest Book – “White Book”
- ☐ Timothy Loest Book (already in folders)
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Baton
- ☐ Drum Sticks
- ☐ Score to *Rampage!*
- ☐ Parts to *Rampage!* (already in folders) – passed out prior to rehearsal beginning

Warm-Up Process and Targeted Rehearsal:

1-2 minutes Greeting, Game Plan, and Announcements

- Greet the band and announce the plan for the upcoming rehearsal
- Make any general announcements per request of the band director

6 minutes Long Tones and Concert F Major Scale

- “F Descending”
 - Begin on middle octave concert F and descend in unmeasured long tones down the F major scale and then back up.
 - Listen for pitch and encourage students to open their ears to the instruments around them and make intonation adjustments as they see fit.

10-12 minutes Timothy Loest Exercises

- P. 16 #3 – Major Chords
 - Play the exercise without meter – tell students to listen to the low tones and if they have moving notes to pay attention to that.
- P. 16 #8 – Major Chorale
 - Remind students to watch for breath marks, look up for dynamics and shaping, and be mindful of the key and accidentals present outside of the key.

Rest of the Period Introductory Rehearsal on *Rampage!*

- Introduce low brass beginning
 - Establish a slower tempo
 - Encourage proper articulation/style/dynamics early on
 - Address note problems as they occur – note by note if necessary

- Make sure all percussion sounds are coming in on the right beats and that instruments are being played in the best possible way to produce good tone.
- Measure 9
 - Address new instruments entering the texture
 - Rehearse trumpets/alto saxes on their counter melody at mm. 13
- Measure 17
 - Rehearse melody in flute/clarinet 1/alto sax 1/bells – address note issues as they may arise
- Measure 106
 - Rehearse ending section
 - Challenge low brass/low reeds to play the eighth note descending line as fast as possible
 - Encourage/facilitate shaping on last crescendo (mm. 110)
 - Play and hold/shape last note to make sure that it is the full note length and sounds good

Assessment:

Are the students ready to effectively rehearse the literature for the day?

Are the students executing all aspects of the warm-up properly?

Are the students maintaining good posture and rehearsal etiquette from the beginning of the warm-up throughout the rest of the rehearsal?

Are basic notes and rhythms happening together?

Is the ensemble (relatively) in tune?

Is the ensemble progressing on the sight-reading of new literature?

Do the students like the piece? Do I like the piece? Is this piece going to be successful with a month of preparation before performance?

Rehearsal Strategy – Concert Band Warm-Up and Targeted Rehearsal
March 22, 2011

Teaching Objective: The goal of this rehearsal is to continue work on Todd Stalter's *Rampage!* by targeting specific problems that occurred the previous rehearsal and "attacking" them. The warm-up should properly prepare the students for the rehearsal by warming them up in the key of the piece and addressing basic issues of balance and blend, attacks and releases, and intonation. The students should leave rehearsal feeling more confident about the piece.

Teaching Materials:

- ☐ Score to Timothy Loest Book – "White Book"
- ☐ Timothy Loest Book (already in folders)
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Baton
- ☐ Drum Sticks
- ☐ Score to *Rampage!*
- ☐ Parts to *Rampage!* (already in folders) – passed out prior to rehearsal beginning

Warm-Up Process and Targeted Rehearsal:

1-2 minutes Greeting, Game Plan, and Announcements

- Greet the band and announce the plan for the upcoming rehearsal
- Make any general announcements per request of the band director
 - Flower sale forms are in the organizer by the band office
 - "A+" projects are due Thursday
 - Marching band drumline and color guard auditions begin the week after Spring Break – information is on the band website.

6 minutes Long Tones and Concert F Major Scale

- "F Descending"
 - Begin on middle octave concert F and descend in unmeasured long tones down the F major scale and then back up.
 - Listen for pitch and encourage students to open their ears to the instruments around them and make intonation adjustments as they see fit.

10-12 minutes Timothy Loest Exercises

- P. 17 #3 – Minor Chords
 - Play the exercise without meter – tell students to listen to the low tones and if they have moving notes to pay attention to that.
- P. 17 #8 – Minor Chorale
 - Remind students to watch for breath marks, look up for dynamics and shaping, and be mindful of the key and accidentals present outside of the key.

Rest of the Period Targeted Rehearsal on *Rampage!*

- Measure 12
 - Play and hold beats 3, 4, and 1 of measure 13
- Measure 10
 - Trombones – no smear! – must articulate every pitch
- Measure 28
 - Build chord on beat 3 from the lowest instruments on up.
 - Model correct fingerings/positions for notes outside of the key
- Measure 27
 - Address the woodwind 16th notes by playing and holding each one, then playing them as eighth notes, then playing them in the written rhythm
- Measure 37
 - Work the rhythm and check fingerings
 - Work on the transition into the tempo change
- Introduce the “B” section of the piece at measure 46
 - Begin with clarinets at mm. 44 – check notes/rhythms, discuss style
 - Address shape/volume of low brass long tones – “if you can see through the note you shouldn’t be too loud”
 - Address flute melody

Assessment:

Are the students ready to effectively rehearse the literature for the day?

Are the students executing all aspects of the warm-up properly?

Are the students maintaining good posture and rehearsal etiquette from the beginning of the warm-up throughout the rest of the rehearsal?

Are basic notes and rhythms happening together?

Is the ensemble (relatively) in tune?

Is the ensemble progressing on the sight-reading of new literature?

Are problems being fixed? Are the students making corrections on their own?

Rehearsal Strategy – Concert Band Warm-Up and Targeted Rehearsal
March 23, 2011

****This lesson was observed by Professor James Dowdy****

Teaching Objective: The goal of this rehearsal is to work on some targeted spots in *Rampage!* as well as introduce the final section of the piece beginning at measure 66. Today marks the third day that the band has seen the piece.

Teaching Materials:

- ☐ Score to Timothy Loest Book – “White Book”
- ☐ Timothy Loest Book (already in folders)
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Baton
- ☐ Drum Sticks
- ☐ Score to *Rampage!*
- ☐ Parts to *Rampage!* (already in folders)

Warm-Up Process and Targeted Rehearsal:

1-2 minutes Greeting and Game Plan

- Greet the band and announce the plan for the upcoming rehearsal

6 minutes Long Tones/Scales

- “F Descending”
 - Begin on middle octave concert F and descend in unmeasured long tones down the F major scale and then back up.
 - Listen for pitch and encourage students to open their ears to the instruments around them and make intonation adjustments as they see fit.
- D minor Scale
 - Begin on the middle octave concert F from “F Descending” and descend down to a concert D and then ascend up to a concert D – “tricking” the band into playing a D minor scale.
 - Listen for intonation on concert E and concert Bb

10-12 minutes Timothy Loest Exercises

- P. 17 #3 – Minor Chords
 - Play the exercise without meter – tell students to listen to the low tones and if they have moving notes to pay attention to that.
- P. 17 #8 – Chorale
 - Remind students to watch for breath marks, look up for dynamics and shaping, and be mindful of the key and accidentals present outside of the key.

Rest of the Period Targeted Rehearsal on *Rampage!*

- Shed the low brass part in the beginning
 - Play and hold – check fingerings/slide positions in measure 4 beats 3 and 4

- Start slow – watch for style – and eventually speed up
- Break down the low brass rhythms and notes at measure 37 – check for correct fingers/slide positions and rehearse the rhythm
- “Flowing”
 - Mention the key change to Bb
 - Rehearse clarinet 2 first (check fingerings) and then add clarinet 1
- 54 – rehearse large chunks of this section and address balance/style/dynamic/direction/note problems as they arise
- Introduce 66 to the end – NOTATE THE NEW KEY!!
 - Walk clarinet 1 down from their Bb to the low E and rehearse their measure
 - Shed eighth notes at 70 in clarinets/flutes/saxes
 - 106-end
 - Shed running eighth note line
 - Shape last note

Assessment:

Are the students ready to effectively rehearse the literature for the day?

Are the students executing all aspects of the warm-up properly?

Is the ensemble balanced?

Is the ensemble (relatively) in tune?

Is the ensemble progressing on the sight-reading of new literature?

Rehearsal Strategy – Concert Band Warm-Up and Targeted Rehearsal
March 24, 2011

EARLY RELEASE SCHEDULE – SHORTENED PERIOD

Teaching Objective: The goal of this rehearsal is to work on some targeted spots in *Rampage!*

Teaching Materials:

- ☐ Score to Timothy Loest Book – “White Book”
- ☐ Timothy Loest Book (already in folders)
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Baton
- ☐ Drum Sticks
- ☐ Score to *Rampage!*
- ☐ Parts to *Rampage!* (already in folders)

Warm-Up Process and Targeted Rehearsal:

1-2 minutes Greeting and Game Plan

- Greet the band and announce the plan for the upcoming rehearsal

6 minutes Long Tones/Scales

- “F Descending”
 - Begin on middle octave concert F and descend in unmeasured long tones down the F major scale and then back up.
 - Listen for pitch and encourage students to open their ears to the instruments around them and make intonation adjustments as they see fit.
- D minor Scale
 - Begin on the middle octave concert F from “F Descending” and descend down to a concert D and then ascend up to a concert D – “tricking” the band into playing a D minor scale.
 - Listen for intonation on concert E and concert Bb

10-12 minutes Timothy Loest Exercises

- P. 17 #3 – Minor Chords
 - Play the exercise without meter – tell students to listen to the low tones and if they have moving notes to pay attention to that.
- P. 17 #8 – Minor Chorale
 - Remind students to watch for breath marks, look up for dynamics and shaping, and be mindful of the key and accidentals present outside of the key.

Rest of the Period Targeted Rehearsal on *Rampage!*

- Mm. 106-end
 - Descending eighth notes
 - Rhythms/note length

- Dynamics/phrasing/shaping/expression within the confines of an ensemble setting.
- Mm. 98-106
 - Running eighth notes in flute/clarinet/alto sax
 - Background parts/percussion
- Mm. 74-78
 - Running eighths
- IF TIME:
 - Transition into mm. 66
 - Reinforce beginning and slow section concepts

Assessment:

Are the students ready to effectively rehearse the literature for the day?

Are the students executing all aspects of the warm-up properly?

Is the ensemble balanced?

Is the ensemble (relatively) in tune?

Is the ensemble retaining information that was taught in previous rehearsals?

Rehearsal Strategy – Concert Band Warm-Up and Targeted Rehearsal
March 25, 2011

Teaching Objective: The goal of this rehearsal is to work on some targeted spots in *Rampage!*

Teaching Materials:

- ☐ Score to Timothy Loest Book – “White Book”
- ☐ Timothy Loest Book (already in folders)
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Baton
- ☐ Drum Sticks
- ☐ Score to *Rampage!*
- ☐ Parts to *Rampage!* (already in folders)

Warm-Up Process and Targeted Rehearsal:

1-2 minutes Greeting and Game Plan

- Greet the band and announce the plan for the upcoming rehearsal
- If the rehearsal goes well, we will let out 10 minutes early

6 minutes Long Tones/Scales

- “F Descending”
 - Begin on middle octave concert F and descend in unmeasured long tones down the F major scale and then back up.
 - Listen for pitch and encourage students to open their ears to the instruments around them and make intonation adjustments as they see fit.
- D minor Scale
 - Begin on the middle octave concert F from “F Descending” and descend down to a concert D and then ascend up to a concert D – “tricking” the band into playing a D minor scale.
 - Listen for intonation on concert E and concert Bb

10-12 minutes Timothy Loest Exercises

- P. 17 #3 – Minor Chords
 - Play the exercise without meter – tell students to listen to the low tones and if they have moving notes to pay attention to that.
- P. 17 #8 – Minor Chorale
 - Remind students to watch for breath marks, look up for dynamics and shaping, and be mindful of the key and accidentals present outside of the key.
 - Experiment with dynamics

Rest of the Period Targeted Rehearsal on *Rampage!*

- Increase tempo in all musical sections
- Focus on continuity between musical phrases and the beginnings of expressive playing

- Work the “B” section
 - Transition material into the “B” section
 - Clarinet 1/Clarinet 2 part
 - Shape of long tones

Assessment:

Are the students ready to effectively rehearse the literature for the day?

Are the students executing all aspects of the warm-up properly?

Is the ensemble balanced?

Is the ensemble (relatively) in tune?

Is the ensemble retaining information that was taught in previous rehearsals?

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment occurs every class in a performance-based instrumental music class. For this unit, the most basic level of formative assessment occurred within the students themselves. I constantly encouraged the students to evaluate how they were playing and have them ask questions similar to the questions at the end of my daily lesson plan assessments.

Some questions that I encouraged that they ask themselves included:

- Am I playing the correct notes and rhythms in a given musical section?
- Am I playing in time with my neighbor?
- Am I playing with good balance as it relates to my instrumental section?
- Am I playing with good balance as it relates to the entire band?
- Am I beginning to play expressively and musically?
- Am I maintaining a steady pulse and watching the conductor?
- Am I playing my instrument with the best possible tone?
- Am I playing my instrument relatively in tune with my neighbors?

Additionally, I frequently isolated instrumental sections and worked with them individually. This, in a way, is a form of formative assessment: I'm listening to individuals or small groups, diagnosing their problems, fixing their problems, and evaluating the success of not only my methodology but their ability to fix the problem and be successful at the musical section. My students understand that the success or failure of the piece depends on individual work outside of band in addition to their attentive rehearsing during the day. The success or failure of the piece additionally depends on the summation of the parts – that is, how the instrumental sections work together to create the music.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

The most obvious form of summative assessment for a performing ensemble or class is, of course, the concert. Since the concert is still over a month away from the submission of this unit plan, my form of summative assessment as it relates to the unit plan involved reflecting at the end of the week on the progress of the ensemble.

By the end of the week the ensemble could:

- Play through the two major musical sections that comprised the piece near tempo with a decent level of accuracy
- Play through and understand a concert F major scale and a concert D minor scale
- Perform complex eighth note syncopations
- Play long musical phrases of running eighth note non-scalar patterns
- Play in balance with their own instrumental section

- Play in balance with the entire band
- Understand their role as melody, countermelody, harmony, or rhythmic accompaniment as it pertained to individual musical sections
- Play articulate as well as legato in the same piece of music
- Perform a key change from F major/D minor to Bb major/G minor
- Begin to connect longer musical phrases together
- Perform changes in style and tempi quickly and accurately
- Begin to scratch the surface of expressive, dynamic, and musical performance
- Work together harmoniously as a band to create the best possible music with the best possible tone quality for their instrument

Summative assessment occurs at the end of each rehearsal day and helps create the planning for the next day in addition to the end of the week and at the concert.

REFLECTION

I believe that this week long unit was a success. The students had grown and matured as musicians through their work on this music and it was clear that the ensemble was improving as a whole and the members were improving individually. The students were successful in a very important process – sight-reading a new piece of music and breaking it down into smaller components. The students were able to appreciate what was happening in other instrumental sections and realize how their part functioned in the entire musical work. Their attention to detail on the smaller sections will prove to be successful as we continue to put the piece together. Since it takes quite a long time to fully prepare a piece of music to be concert ready, the true success of this particular unit will not be evident until mid-May. However, the most important period of time in the entire process is the time in which this unit covers – the initial exposure and initial rehearsal of a new piece of music. This initial exposure sets the tone for how the piece will go as well as begins to form the student opinion about the music. Since this process was run efficiently and effectively, I believe that the most important success to note is not only the student accomplishments in a short amount of time but also the student's enjoyment of the piece. If the students did not find some sort of individual success with what they were playing they would be dramatically less likely to enjoy the piece.